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Bolivia

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Preface

Bolivia is a land of spectacular geographic contrasts. Its natural beauties range from snowcapped Andean Mountains to the dramatically barren "Altiplano" with its beautifully blue Lake Titicaca, to lush Amazonian lowland jungles. Its people vary from modern urban dwellers to the traditionally dressed post-Inca Quechua- and Aymara-speaking Indians. Life in the clear, pleasantly cool air of La Paz, the world's highest capital, is colorful in its cultural juxtapositions.

View of El Prado, one of the main avenues in La Paz. To the right, the BISA building (dark windows) where the USAID offices are located.

This is the official post report prepared by the post. The information contained herein is directed to official US Government employees and their families. Any other information concerning the facts as set forth herein is to be regarded as unofficial information.

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The Host Country

Area, Geography, and Climate

Landlocked Bolivia shares borders with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Peru. With an area of 424,000 square miles, Bolivia's landmass equals the combined area of Texas and California. Bolivia has three well-defined geographic zones—high plateau (altiplano), temperate and semitropical valleys of the eastern mountain slopes ("yungas"), and tropical lowlands ("llanos") of the Amazon River Basin. Each region differs significantly from the others.

Lying between the main eastern and western ridges of the Andean Mountains, the "altiplano" is 500 miles long and 80 miles wide. At altitudes ranging from 12,000–14,000 feet, it is one of the world's highest inhabited regions. Lake Titicaca, situated on the altiplano, straddles the northern Bolivia-Peru border. It has an area of 3,500 square miles, has depths down to 700 feet, and has a constant temperature of 55°F. Surrounding the lake is the most agriculturally productive and heavily populated section of the altiplano, with a population density of more than 125 persons per square mile in some localities. The inhabitants are mainly Aymara and Quechua Indians who maintain a primitive subsistence with an agricultural and grazing economy. Livestock include sheep, cows, goats, alpacas, llamas, and the protected vicunas. Rich mineral deposits, which form Bolivia's economic backbone, are found in nearby mountain areas (La Paz, Oruro, Potosi).

The "yungas," with its temperate and semi-tropical valleys, lie east-northeast of the altiplano. These areas vary in altitude from 1,600 feet to 9,000 feet above sea level and have a moderate, warm, and humid climate. This region is a major supplier of agricultural products—chief crops are corn, barley, coffee, cacao, coca, citrus fruit, and sugarcane. Cochabamba, Sucre, and Tarija are major cities situated in mountain valleys farther to the southeast of La Paz.

The "llanos" cover more than two-thirds of the country. Through the llanos flow the major tributaries of the Amazon: the Mamore, Beni, Ichilo, Itenes, and Madre de Dios Rivers. Except for Santa Cruz, lowland areas are sparsely populated and underdeveloped. This fertile region offers excellent potential for agriculture and stockraising. Santa Cruz (Bolivia's second largest city), Trinidad, Riberalta, and Cobija are the principal lowland cities.

Bolivia lies entirely within the Tropics, but the extreme differences in elevation—from a low of 300 feet along the Brazilian border to more than 21,000 feet of the highest mountain peaks—produce a great variety of climatic conditions. This, coupled with wide soil diversity, results in highly varied vegetation, ranging from the sparse scrub grasses in semiarid highlands to lush rain forests containing a variety of valuable hardwoods.

There are basically two seasons in La Paz. A rainy season begins in December and continues through March; some rain falls almost daily during this period. Rainfall averages 20 inches a year. April to November is regarded as the dry season. The climate is generally cool, but brilliant sunshine raises daytime temperatures. Midday outdoor parties and activities are very pleasant. (The temperatures below are readings in shade; the midday sun of La Paz can be 10°F to 15°F warmer than the "high" indicated.)

Population

Reliable demographic data is difficult to obtain in Bolivia. Bolivia's estimated population in 1983 was about 6.08 million, with almost 1 million people inhabitating metropolitan La Paz. Estimates show that by 1995 Bolivia's population should be nearly 8 million. Population density (2 per square mile), lowest in Latin America, varies greatly by area.

Bolivia is predominantly an Indian culture. About 65% of the people are Aymara and Quechua Indians, having descended from peoples of Inca and pre-Inca cultures. Most Indians live in rural areas or villages, but recent economic problems have lessened rural-urban migration, especially to La Paz, which has a pronounced Indian influence. Colorful fiestas, which often last for days, occasionally brighten the hard daily life of the Indian population. Bolivians of mixed Indian and European ancestry (mestizo) comprise 20%–30% of the population and work mostly in small businesses, factories, and government offices. Spanish is the official language, but there are areas where only an Indian dialect is spoken.

The rest of the population are of European descent and fill a majority of Bolivian professional and managerial positions. A large-scale immigration of Europeans to Bolivia occurred before and during World War II, and more recently there have been

Month	*Low*	*High*	*Average*	*Days per Month of Rainfall*
Jan.	43°	64°	54°	25
Feb.	43	64	54	16
Mar.	42	64	53	15
Apr.	40	66	53	7
May	35	66	51	1
June	36	60	49	6
July	34	61	41	1
Aug.	35	62	49	6
Sept.	38	62	50	12
Oct.	40	65	53	11
Nov.	42	67	55	10
Dec.	43	64	54	24

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smaller immigrations of Taiwanese, Japanese, Koreans, and Mennonites to the under populated tropical lowlands of Santa Cruz.

In early 1984, the English-speaking population of La Paz included some 1,800 Americans (about 20% are U.S. Government personnel, including dependents) and about 100 British nationals. A large German-speaking community lives in La Paz.

Public Institutions

Between A.D. 600 and 900 the Tiahuanaco Indian civilization thrived at the southern end of Lake Titicaca and produced a highly advanced culture known as Tiahuanaco. About A.D. 1200 the Quechua-speaking Incas invaded the region and controlled most of present-day Bolivia until the Spanish conquest of the Inca Empire in 1553.

During most of the Spanish colonial period the area was a dependency of the Viceroyalty of Lima. The principal cities were Chuquisaca (now Sucre), the seat of the Audiencia de Charcas, Potosi, and La Paz. Bolivian silver mines were a major source of the Spanish Empire's wealth, and for many years Potosi was the Western Hemisphere's largest city. Independence was proclaimed in 1809, but only after 16 years of struggle was the republic, named after Simon Bolivar, established on August 6, 1825.

In the 19th century, political instability led to several military takeovers and impeded social and economic progress. In a war with Chile (1879–84) Bolivia lost its seacoast and the rich nitrate fields and copper mines near Antofagasta, Chile. Since then, Bolivia has maintained its right to a Pacific seaport.

Political stability improved somewhat during the early 20th century. But, the Chaco War with Paraguay (1932–35) exhausted Bolivia economically and discredited its traditional ruling classes. The ensuing political unrest ended with the revolution of April 9, 1952.

The revolution placed in power the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) from 1952–64. The MNR is historically Bolivia's most broadly based party. The MNR government introduced universal suffrage, agrarian and educational reform, and nationalized the three largest private tin enterprises under the state mining corporation, COMIBOL.

Divisions within the MNR and growing opposition to its rule led to its overthrow in November 1964 by a military junta. The junta retained, however, the revolution's major reforms. In August 1966, the junta's leader was constitutionally elected President. In September 1969, the Armed Forces overthrew the President and formed a revolutionary civilian-military government.

From late 1969 to the present, Bolivia has experienced several coups and changes of government (both civilian and military). The last President to serve was Congressionally elected in October 1982 to a 4-year term.

The first 2 years of this government were marked by national disasters, a deteriorating economy, and a lack of political consensus. The increasingly fragile government was teetering by late 1984, threatened by extremists of both the far left and far right but also undercut by its own lack of coherency. The President, responding to an initiative of the Roman Catholic Church, began talks with the political opposition. As a result of these meetings, the President decided to curtail his term of office by a year, calling for elections in June 1985.

Arts, Science, and Education

Universal suffrage and education began with the 1952 revolution. A lack of facilities and teachers has hampered efforts to reduce the high level of illiteracy. The number of rural teachers and rural primary schools, however, has more than doubled.

Bolivia has nine national universities, including the University of San Andres (UMSA) in La Paz; two Catholic universities, located in La Paz and Cochabamba; and a Methodist university in Santa Cruz. In addition to their standard curriculum, the universities serve as research centers for astronomy, geology, genetics, and other sciences. The UMSA observatory at Chacaltaya (near La Paz) is known worldwide for its study of cosmic rays.

The National Symphony Orchestra and the Coral Nova choir, based in La Paz, offer concerts during their yearly season, and visiting music and dance performers are occasionally sponsored by the Casa de la Cultura, the Centro Boliviano Americano, and other cultural institutions. Folk music can be enjoyed on weekends and some week nights at the folklore nightclubs called "peñas." The Municipal Theater stages a varied repertory of plays, concerts, dance performances, and opera throughout the year.

Art exhibits are held in the National Museum of Art, the Casa de la Cultura, the Centro Boliviano Americano, and commercial art galleries in the major cities. Among the most interesting historical museums are the Casa Murillo and the Tihuanaco museum in La Paz, the Colonial and Cathedral museums in Sucre, the Casa de la Moneda in Potosi, and the Patiño mansion, "Portales," in Cochabamba. Their collections include outstanding examples of pre-Inca and Inca artifacts, religious relics, and colonial art.

Bolivia is reputed to have some of the most authentic handicrafts in Latin America, ranging from boldly stylized weavings to delicately crafted metal work. Whether in the colorful Indian markets or urban boutiques, good buys are to be found in silver and gold jewelry, pewter ware, leather goods, and articles woven from llama and alpaca wool.

Commerce and Industry

Bolivia is one of South America's least developed countries. Vast expanses of unused land, at present almost inaccessible except by air, are found in the tropical east. Significant deposits of unexploited minerals purportedly exist in many regions. Nevertheless, Bolivia is the poorest country in South America, with an annual per capita income in 1984 estimated at $600. About 60% of the population is employed in subsistence agriculture. Most live on the marginally productive Altipano and in Andean valleys. Tropical diseases and a lack of support systems have hampered official programs to colonize more fertile and potentially productive, tropical areas.

Mining and gas exports account for 90% of Bolivia's foreign exchange. In 1980, declining internal production placed Bolivia fourth among international tin-producing nations; antimony, copper, zinc, tungsten, silver, gold, bismuth, and lead are also mined.

The small industrial sector of the Bolivian economy accounts for some 13% of GNP. Major industries include cotton and wool textile manufacturers, sugar refining, food and beverage processing, and mining and mineral refining.

In 1983 heavy rains in parts of the country, and a drought in other areas, produced a 25% drop in agricultural production. This, plus political uncertainties, a

crushing external debt burden, negligible public sector investment, and investment flight, decreased GNP by 8%.

The Agency for International Development (AID) administers the American economic and technical assistance program in Bolivia. It concentrates on improving the lives of the poorest sectors of society, largely in rural areas, with emphasis on agriculture, education, and health. Bolivia has also received assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank, Andean Development Fund, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and industrialized nations.

Transportation

Automobiles

Most employees bring a vehicle. Any model will do for city driving, but cars with low ground clearance should have skid plates. Traveling outside La Paz, where roads are not paved, requires a 4-wheel drive vehicle. When available, official vehicles with drivers can be rented by U.S. Mission personnel for day trips on weekends or holidays. Those who live in lower-lying suburbs, have families, or plan to travel extensively outside La Paz will find a car necessary. Those who choose to live downtown will also find one useful as the public transportation systems are overcrowded. You can order standard U.S. model cars in La Paz from local dealers or U.S. companies. Delivery takes from 2 to 3 months. Ordering Japanese autos is also possible with a maximum wait of 3 months. Brazilian-made Volkswagens can be bought duty free through a local dealer. Delivery takes from 8 weeks to 3 months.

Streets in La Paz are steep, narrow, made of cobblestone, and often slippery in rainy months. Outside La Paz most roads are unpaved, can be dangerous, and are sometimes impassable during the rainy season.

Vehicles drive on the right in Bolivia. Defensive driving is essential to avoid traffic hazards here. La Paz has few stop signs, and automatic traffic lights are erratic. Car horns are sounded to signal right-of-way at intersections. Many Bolivian drivers do not use headlights for night driving, while others use only their parking lights.

If you bring a car, it should have 6- to 8-ply, heavy-duty tires, a high-altitude carburetor, heavy-duty suspension, and a low-gear ratio. If you plan to travel frequently in rural areas, a metal plate to cover the car's underside will protect it from rocks and potholes. A 4-wheel-drive vehicle is recommended since its sturdier construction and height from the ground are more suitable for driving on poor rural roads. These vehicles make accessible many beautiful and interesting areas of Bolivia, including the mountains near La Paz, and are essential for fishing, hunting, or camping. Tinted windshields are recommended to shield you from intense ultraviolet rays. Air-conditioning adds comfort to driving on unpaved, dusty roads, but it is not essential.

Repair facilities are available and are fairly good. Labor is inexpensive although parts may be expensive. A good shop manual is useful. Spare parts and accessories are often unavailable. Bring parts that need frequent replacement (i.e., fan belts, air, oil and gas filters, and heavy-duty shock absorbers). Emergency tools, spare tires and tubes, jacks, and tire irons are recommended, as well as a first-aid kit. A locking gas cap and an extra-large gas tank are useful, if available for your car. Unleaded gasoline restrictive device employed in the U.S. should be removed from gasoline tanks before shipment. For long trips outside La Paz, one or two locking jerrycans for gas are recommended since gas stations are scarce or nonexistent in many countryside areas.

The Mission obtains drivers licenses (for a small fee) for all personnel who present a valid U.S. or other drivers license. Diplomatic license plates are gratis for diplomatic list persons. Others pay U.S. $6 for official license plates.

All U.S. Government personnel must carry third-party liability insurance. The minimum amount of insurance you decide to carry depends largely on the insurance company you choose to use. Comprehensive insurance, including theft, is recommended since minor accidents and pilferage of car accessories (particularly windshield wipers, mirrors, and antennas) are common. Thieves are becoming more and more sophisticated and are also adept at removing items from locked trunks. Third-party liability insurance is easily obtained locally. **See also** Customs, Duties, and Passage.

Local

Bus and taxi service is erratic at best. Small buses (micros) operate between the city and suburbs; they carry 21 seated passengers and as many standees as possible. Taxis must be hailed (no call service) and are identified by orange license plates with a "T" prefix. All taxis are "collectives:" you share your cab with as many passengers as possible. "Trufi" taxis (with flags on the front fenders) follow fixed routes. Other taxis will go anywhere.

Regional

Eastern Airlines has jet service to and from the U.S. 3 days a week and connections to Guayaquil, Cali, and Asuncion. LAN Chile and LAB (Lloyd Aereo Boliviano) also fly to and from Santiago. Lufthansa has two flights a week to and from Lima. Lloyd Aereo Boliviano, the national airline, has frequent flights to all major Bolivian cities and international flights to Arica, Asuncion, Cusco, Caracas, Lima, Panama, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, and Miami. Argentine, Brazilian, and Paraguayan Airlines have flights to respective cities.

Train service is limited and slow. Trains run from La Paz to Antofagasta and Arica, Chile, to Argentina, and to some internal cities. An interesting trip (about 18 hours) runs between La Paz and Cochabamba. Many points in Bolivia can be reached only by bus (flotas), truck, or automobile, over poor roads. Some areas are frequently inaccessible except by 4-wheel-drive vehicles and then only during the dry season.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

La Paz has a dial-telephone system. ENTEL (Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones) provides long-distance, nondirect dial service to the U.S. Long-distance calls may be made from your home or from the telephone company. Direct dial in-country is possible between La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Santa Cruz. Other areas can be reached through the long-distance operator. Due to shortage of equipment and lines, new telephone installation is difficult and expensive. If possible, extension phones should be brought as most residences have existing telephone jacks.

The telephone company does not send telephone bills. If payment is overdue, the phone is disconnected. Telephone bills can be paid at various bank branch offices; consult the Budget and Fiscal Office for details.

Mail and Pouch

All Mission members may send and receive mail by international mail and APO. APO postal restrictions as to weight or size limits (when mailing to the U.S.) are the same as those in the U.S.—(70 pounds maximum and 100 inches maximum, length and girth combined). If mailing other than to the U.S., restrictions may differ. Check with APO for other allowances and restrictions outside the U.S. Average delivery time for an airmail letter to the Washington, D.C. area is 5 days by APO and 5–8 days by international mail, since the handling of international mail is subject to interruption by Bolivian postal authorities. APO mail is the preferred method.

SAM mail (Space Available Mail) usually takes 2–3 weeks to reach La Paz but is recommended for expensive and easily stolen items such as stereo components, cameras, etc. The postage rate for international airmail is 40¢ a half ounce; mail sent by APO and pouch requires domestic U.S. postage.

The Department air pouch may be used only for prescription medicine, eyeglasses, hearing aids, batteries, prosthetic devices, orthopedic shoes, and other emergency health and welfare items (regardless of weight). Those items must be properly identified. APO service is faster than pouch. Foreign Service regulations prohibit pouch facilities for sending parcels to and from La Paz other than for those above cited items.

Use the following addresses:

APO Facilities

(Name)
American Embassy (Section, Office, or Agency)
APO Miami 34032
FOR AID EMPLOYEES: Use USAID/ Bolivia vice Embassy

International Mail

(Name)
American Embassy (and agency)
Casilla 425
La Paz, Bolivia

State Department Air Pouch

(Name)
La Paz (section, Office, or Agency)
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Radio and TV

La Paz has 17 AM and 7 FM radio stations which broadcast in Spanish and in two Indian languages. Music programs include Bolivian and Latin music, American popular music, and some classical selections. Some stations specialize in sports and cultural programs. All stations currently tie into the government-published news broadcasts. With a shortwave radio you can receive foreign broadcasts. Quality of shortwave and FM reception varies with location and ionospheric conditions but is adequate. An outside antenna improves reception.

There are three TV stations (7, 13, and 9) in La Paz, operated by the Bolivian government, the Bolivian University, and a private enterprise. They transmit U.S. standard color presentations (NTSC) in the evenings, with expanded weekend hours. All programs, including U.S. TV series, are in Spanish. U.S. sets receive these programs adequately.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

La Paz boasts six daily Spanish-language newspapers, four of which appear in the morning, one at midday and one in the afternoon. The better newspapers provide adequate, if superficial, coverage of international events with more in-depth attention paid to national news. Only one local magazine appears regularly, *Criterio.* There is no press censorship in Bolivia.

USIS distributes copies of its English-language Wireless File throughout the Mission on a daily basis.

No English-language newspapers are published in La Paz and no U.S. newspapers are available for purchase. Many Mission employees subscribe to U.S. papers and receive them via the APO; papers received this way normally arrive 2–8 days after the date of publication.

The Latin American editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available at newsstands each week. In addition, a few other American magazines are available, although they are expensive and tend to be outdated. The Centro Boliviano Americano subscribes to about 100 U.S. magazines and receives copies of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post.*

English-language books and paperbacks are available at a few La Paz bookstores but are expensive. Mission employees may join the library at the Centro Boliviano Americano and withdraw books and magazines from there. The La Paz Book Club maintains a lending library of about 400 current titles in English. Membership, open to English-speaking persons, is limited to 50. Openings occur frequently enough, however, that interested persons are normally accepted during their first year in La Paz. Many Mission personnel belong to U.S. book or record clubs. However, because of strikes, blockades, and other unforeseen complications, airlines sometimes don't carry mail. It is therefore suggested that if you choose this option you request the overseas plan to assure that only specifically ordered selections will be sent.

Video cassette recorders are popular at post and there are several clubs which offer English-language material in both Beta and VHS formats. These clubs tend to have a much wider selection of material in the BETA format.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The Embassy maintains a Medical Unit in the Chancery for all U.S. citizen employees and their dependents. The staff consists of a State Department RMO doctor, a contract nurse, and a secretary. Several good physicians and dentists, some U.S. trained, practice in La Paz, and four local physicians provide Medical Advisory services in their respective specialties.

Hospitals and in-patient clinics for the most part are inadequate by U.S. standards. There is a small maternity clinic which is adequate for normal deliveries—however, because of the possibility of unforeseen complications, expectant mothers are strongly advised to deliver other than in Bolivia. Medical evacuation to Panama or Miami is available for pregnant women.

Bring enough essential medications and first-aid supplies to La Paz or arrange for its shipment prior to your departure. The Medical Unit pharmacy maintains an adequate supply of medications to treat most illnesses that arise, but cannot provide first-aid supplies for each household nor provide medications used on a long-term basis.

Because of the dry climate, humidifiers and vaporizers are suggested as part of every household shipment. Also, a large supply of hand and body moisturizer lotions and antichapping preparations are highly recommended.

The Medical Unit has a limited supply of sunscreen preparations so anyone with known sun exposure sensitivity should bring an adequate supply to post.

The Medical Unit provides immunizations, but because of delays in receiving supplies it is highly recommended that the following immunizations are up-to-date before arrival at post: yellow fever, diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus for children,

diphtheria-tetanus for adults, trivalent oral polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and typhoid. The most important of these to obtain before arrival to post is yellow fever.

Gamma globulin is available and recommended to authorized personnel and dependents every 6 months for prevention. Take gamma globulin before arrival if possible.

Some people have difficulty with contact lenses due to diminished atmospheric pressure and dry air. Bring plenty of lubricating solution from the U.S. Severe sunburn and excessive skin dryness are the most troublesome skin disorders. Ultraviolet radiation is high; light-skinned persons should have no more than 15 minutes of direct or reflected exposure. Sunscreen creams and lotions will help prevent burning or chapping, and the use of harsh soaps is discouraged. Bring sunscreen and skin lotions, shampoos, hair rinses, and bath gel or oil from the U.S.

New arrivals should present themselves to the Medical Unit as soon after arrival as possible to set up an appointment for complete medical and health orientation to gain a good understanding of the problems present in the area, and effective means of prevention and control.

Community Health

Rabies exists here because many wild or loose dogs roam freely through the cities and countryside. Report all animal bites and scratches immediately to the Medical Unit or a private physician. Routine pre-exposure rabies vaccine is recommended. Try to identify the animal and hold it for observation or examination if possible. Have personal pets vaccinated against rabies, distemper, and parvo virus. Snakes and venomous insects are rare except in tropical areas.

Bolivia's overall sanitation programs are poor, and sewage disposal is inefficient and inadequate. City water is not potable, and few official inspection systems for water and food products exist. No pest and vermin control programs, container sterilization or food and beverage adulteration inspections exist, therefore, incidence of intestinal disorders, especially during rainy December, January, and February, is high.

Preventive Measures

The most important preventive measure is a thorough physical exam prior to coming to La Paz. Newcomers should rest for the first 3 days after arrival, eat only light meals, and not drink alcoholic beverages or smoke cigarettes for the first week. Exercise is recommended after a reasonable period of adjustment. Some newcomers are apprehensive due to exaggerated accounts of altitude effects. Symptoms are grouped under the local term "soroche," and may include headaches, sleeplessness or sudden awakening, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, abdominal cramps, nausea or vomiting, chest pains, and dizziness. These symptoms, if they occur at all, gradually decrease or disappear after a few days. Many of the symptoms are due to dehydration, so one should be sure to drink sufficient fluids.

Since sanitation is poor, special care when preparing food and water is essential. Well-cooked and hot food is safe. Fruits and vegetables should be washed and soaked in water and iodine or Clorox. (Add enough iodine to color the water and soak for 20 minutes or use Clorox which does not stain.) Buy fresh meat and fish and serve well cooked. Reconstituted milk and pasteurized butter from the PIL dairy in Cochabamba are normally available in La Paz. Cheese and butter imported from Argentina are also pasteurized.

Water for drinking, ice cubes, brushing teeth, and rinsing vegetables and fruits, should be filtered and then boiled for at least 20 minutes at this altitude. For out-of-town trips, treat water with Globaline tablets, available at the Medical Unit.

Servants should be impressed with the importance of sanitation and cleanliness to maintain good health and prevent illness. Assure that servants wash their hands with soap and water before they handle food and whenever they enter the house from outdoors. Many servants do not understand proper sanitary measures and should be carefully supervised in food preparation. Mission Community Liaison and medical offices sponsor regular hygiene training sessions for servants. All servants should have a medical examination before they are hired.

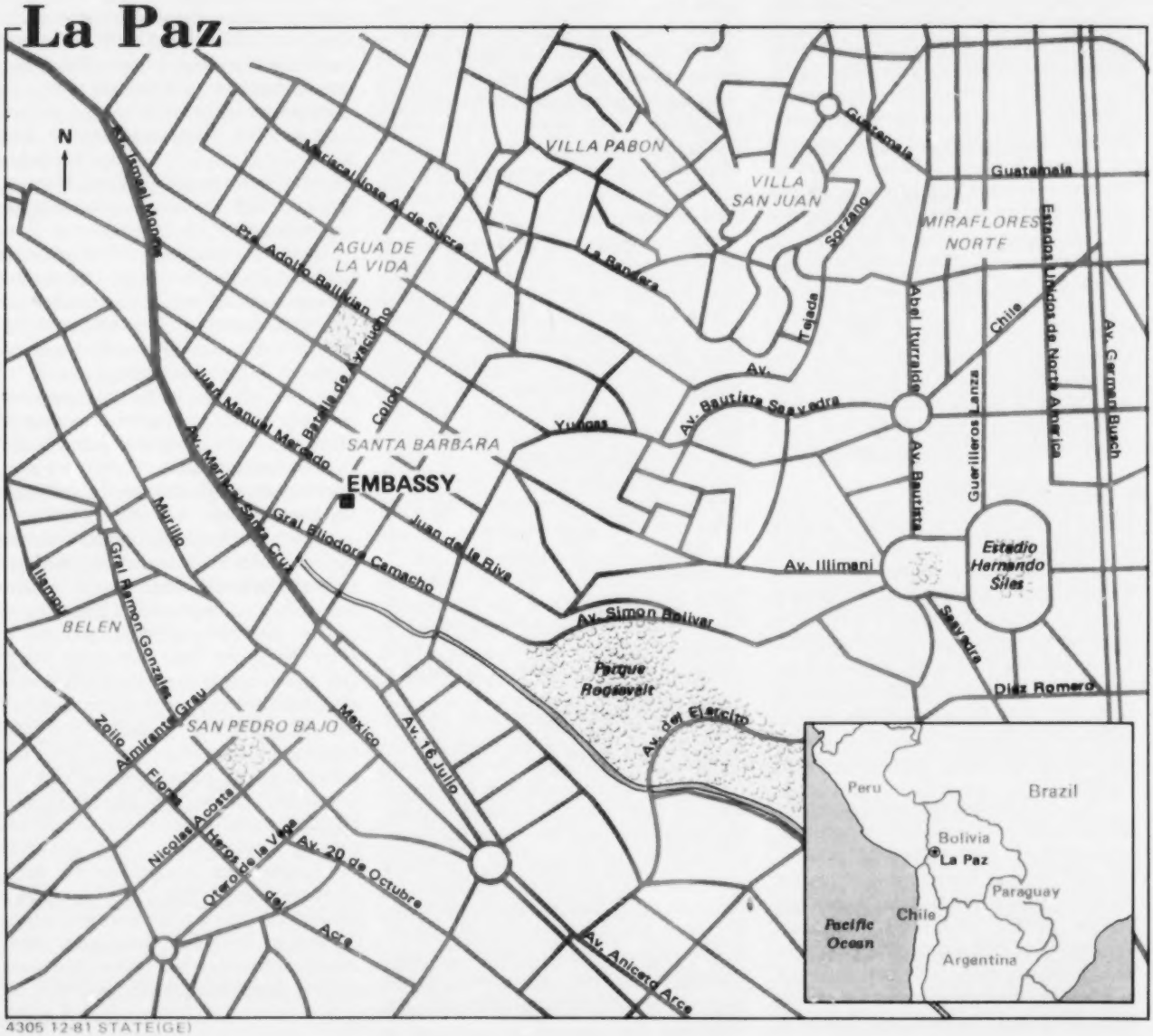
Employment for Spouses and Dependents

Most adult dependents wishing work here find at least part-time or temporary employment. Various Mission agencies occasionally have clerical/secretarial positions available on a temporary-contract basis. Depending on need, these range in duration from a few days to several months. Other opportunities occur from time to time (professional nurses, translators). The Community Liaison Officer (CLO) position is encumbered by a spouse. Dependents interested in Mission employment should write the Community Liaison Office, American Embassy, APO Miami 34032, early, giving qualifications, date of arrival, length of intended stay in La Paz, and the employee's assigned organization.

Certified teachers interested in teaching at the American Cooperative School should write to Director, American Cooperative School, APO Miami 34032, providing the same information as above. Although occasional openings occur all year, most full-time hiring is completed by mid-July. Part-time, private tutoring is often requested in various subjects and qualified persons are in demand. Two or three spouses may substitute regularly during a school year.

Part-time positions are also available for dependents in the commissary and Teen Center. The post's isolation and its relative lack of cultural opportunities have provided the impetus for some spouses to creatively invent their own employment: One spouse taught modeling and make-up; one taught art and presented expositions; one taught batik making; one sold elaborate cakes on commission; one operated a plant nursery; one volunteered as a church secretary which led to a paying job; several have offered specialized cooking courses, etc.

Employment possibilities for teenagers are limited. The CLO has set up a summer job program for teenagers within the Mission. Babysitting jobs occur. Other teens have created their own employment as have dependent parents.



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American Embassy

La Paz

La Paz, the de facto capital of Bolivia, is in the west-central part of the country, in a deep canyon about 60 miles east of Lake Titicaca. At 11,800 feet, La Paz is the highest capital city in the world. Due to high altitude isolation, a lack of reliable services, and unstable political conditions, La Paz is a 25% differential post, with an R&R authorized as far as Panama as an overseas point, and Miami in the U.S. during a 2-year assignment.

La Paz was founded in 1548 by Spanish conquistadors who chose the site as a halfway station for the llama pack trains bearing silver ore from Potosi to Lima. After Bolivia achieved independence, La Paz became its commercial and financial center. Although Sucre is the constitutional capital, all government offices except the Supreme Court are in La Paz. Its architecture combines colonial and modern styles. Older sections, with their narrow, cobblestoned streets, contain some fine, 16th-century colonial buildings. Many high rise offices, hotels, and apartment buildings have been built in the city's center. Most business is conducted in small shops or in local market stalls run by colorfully clad Indian women. Business activity within La Paz is mainly light industry, such as clothing and food manufacture and commercial and financial enterprises which support the country's mining economy.

One of La Paz's few level areas is adjacent to Avenida 16 de Julio (the Prado) in downtown La Paz. Almost all major streets radiate from the Prado. Some are so steep that they are difficult to negotiate on foot or by car. Deeply eroded water courses cut through the city at a number of points, contributing to the irregular street patterns. Slopes of the surrounding cliffs are rocky and bleak except where eucalyptus and pine trees are growing. Although the altiplano is barren, magnificent snowcapped mountain peaks (particularly Mt. Illimani) overlooking the canyon and multicolored eroded hillsides provide a spectacular backdrop for La Paz. La Paz airport, above the city on the altiplano, is the highest international airport in the world, at 13,400 feet above sea level. Descending from the altiplano you have a beautiful view of the canyon and city. Year round, particularly in winter, the air is crystal clear and the sky is a magnificent blue.

The Post and Its Administration

The Mission comprises various agencies. There are eight agencies in addition to the State Department contingent which include USAID, Inter-American Geodetic Survey (IAGS), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Defense Attache Office (DAO), Military Group (MILGP), USIS, Narcotics Assistance Unit (NAU), and the Commerce Department. Most offices are in the Chancery building located on Calle Colon. The telephone number is 350120. USAID is located in a separate building as is the Consulate Section. Hours in most offices are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm. A general duty officer is on duty after hours. The Chancery is always open, and a Marine Guard is on duty at all times. La Paz has an active Community Liaison Officer (CLO) which provides information about housing, schools, shopping, dependent employment, etc. The CLO is a dependent of a U.S. employee at post and serves the Embassy community, as well as assisting new arrivals and their families.

Housing

Temporary Quarters

Newcomers are usually housed in temporary quarters in an Embassy or USAID-leased temporary apartment or house, if permanent quarters are not ready upon arrival. Rarely do new personnel stay in hotels upon arrival. However, when necessary, the following hotels in downtown La Paz are used: Sheraton, Plaza, Libertador, Gloria, and El Dorado. Rates are comparable to those in the U.S. The Libertador and Sheraton Hotels are used most frequently.

Permanent Housing

Government-owned houses in La Paz include the Ambassador's, DCM's, and administrative counselor's residences; Defense attache and Army attache's residences, and the Marine House. All government-provided housing is furnished. Updated photographs and detailed information on these residences are available from FBO in the Department of State. For Defense attache's housing, contact the Defense Intelligence Agency's Attache Affairs Office (AT-G) in Pomponio Plaza (Arlington, Virginia).

The Mission leases government-furnished houses and apartments for all Department of State, USAID, DEA, DAO, NAU, and USIS staff under the control of a Housing Board. USAID attempts to lease residences under 5-year contracts with renewal options thereafter. The Embassy and USAID General Services Offices maintain government-owned and -leased housing. Mission personnel who negotiate private leases must consult the Mission's Housing Board before making any commitment.

The Defense Attache's and Army Attache's government-owned houses are also furnished and maintained by the Department of State. Other personnel assigned to the Defense Attache Office occupy government-leased and -furnished quarters. IAGS and MILGRP personnel occupy privately leased quarters.

Most Mission personnel with families reside in nearby surburbs such as Calacoto, Obrajes, La Florida, and Irpavi. These suburbs are located 6 miles from the city's center and are about 1,000 feet lower in altitude. Most homes in these suburbs have attractive walled gardens. Most apartments are downtown; several are in the Sopocachi area. Since it is cool after sundown year round in La Paz and central heating is rare, fireplaces are a necessity. The Mission provides firewood, as well as space heaters, both gas and electric and replaces gas bottles as necessary.

Local law prohibits keeping pets in apartments. Before bringing a pet to post, consult the Administrative Office to learn what type of quarters you will occupy.

The U.S. Ambassador's residence.

Plaza Avaroa, located in a suburb called Sopocachi where the Embassy residence and the Marine House are situated.

Furnishings

At present, furnishings are supplied to Embassy, USAID, USIS, NAU, and DAO personnel. Other agencies' employees and some contract USAID personnel, depending on their contracts, bring their own furniture. Locally made furniture generally is not to American taste; selection is limited and expensive. If you occupy unfurnished housing and are entitled to a full shipment, bring complete furnishings. Most houses and apartments have stoves, refrigerators, washers and dryers, light fixtures, and water heaters. Many are without closets and heat. If you are authorized full household effects shipment, consult your Administrative Office for details. Do not bring antiques; the dry air and bright sun of La Paz age furniture.

State, USICA, USAID, NAU, and DAO personnel receive unlined drapes or curtains. As there are no standard-size windows in La Paz it is suggested that curtains be made locally or ordered from mail-order houses after arrival. Keep in mind, however, that all locally available material is expensive.

Good fur and wool rugs are made and sold in La Paz at reasonable prices. Bring kitchenware and small appliances. They are both hard to find here and expensive—particularly small electrical appliances (irons, blenders, toasters). Bring a meat grinder or chopper to make hamburger. To enjoy citrus fruits, which are plentiful and inexpensive when in season, a juicer is worthwhile. High-altitude cooking is easier and faster with pressure cookers. Water filters are necessary to purify and clarify water for drinking and cooking and are provided in government-furnished quarters.

State, USAID, USIS, NAU, and DAO personnel receive furniture according to family size and availability. Following is a list of furniture provided for a family of four:

Living Room: 1 couch, 1 chair with ottoman, 2 occasional chairs, 1 coffee table, 3 end tables, 3 table lamps, 1 rug, 1 gas heater, fireplace screen and utensils, drapes or curtains.

Dining Room: 1 table, 8 chairs, 1 buffet, 1 china cabinet, 1 curio cabinet, 1 gas heater, 1 rug, drapes or curtains.

Study: 1 desk with chair, 2 chairs, 1 large or 2 small bookcases, 1 rug, 1 table lamp, drapes or curtains

Master Bedroom: 1 double or 2 single beds, 2 pillows, 1 double or 2 single electric blankets, 1 double or 2 single bedspreads, 1 chest of drawers, 1 mirror, 1 chair, 1 humidifier, 1 rug, drapes or curtains, 1 dresser

Additional Bedrooms: 2 single beds, 2 single electric blankets, 2 bedspreads, 2 pillows, 1 night stand, 1 table lamp, 1 dresser, 1 chest of drawers, 1 mirror, 1 chair, 1 humidifier, 1 rug, drapes or curtains

Kitchen: 1 electric range, 1 refrigerator, 1 freezer, 1 water filter, 1 stepstool

Bathroom (each): 1 electric heater, 1 shower curtain (full baths only)

Laundry: 1 automatic washer, 1 dryer, 1 ironing board with cover

Miscellaneous: 1 card table with 4 folding chairs, 4 garden chairs, 3 garden tables, 1 garden chaise lounge, 1 telephone table, 2 throw rugs (3x5'), 1 desk with chair (in addition to study, one desk and chair supplied for each two family members), one 50-foot garden hose, 1 lawnmower, one stepladder, 1 garbage can

Occasional shortages occur. The GSO will advise State, USIS, and DAO personnel of expected furnishing and, if housing has been identified, what size quarters they will occupy. Many houses under lease have additional space for which furnishings are not supplied and personnel may decide to include additional furnishings in their limited shipment.

USAID does not supply pillows, electric blankets, bedspreads, waste baskets, pressure cookers, or garden furniture except in Welcome Kits issued before your household effects arrive. Therefore USAID personnel should ship these items.

All employees are issued Welcome Kits for use until permanent housing is available. They consist of bed linens, towels, eating and cooking utensils, an iron and ironing board, and radio.

Utilities and Equipment

Utilities (except for telephone and garbage collection fees) are paid by post. In privately leased quarters, tenants pay the utilities.

Government-leased residences have electric water heaters. These must be cleaned to remove sediment. Periodic water shortages occur during the dry months (June to September). During shortages, water is shut off in late evening and at night. Some houses have water storage tanks or wells.

Electricity in La Paz is 110v, 50-cycle AC and 220v. Most houses have very few 220v outlets. Occasional power failures are short; however candles, flashlights, and small kerosene or gas stoves are useful and should be kept available. Electric clocks do not function here, unless they use 60-cycle AC.

Convert turntables and tape recorders (unless belt-driven) to 50hz before arrival. Occasionally it can be done locally, but the cost is high and parts may be unavailable. TV's are expensive in La Paz. The Bolivian national TV network operates on U.S. standard color and U.S. TV's (NTSC) can be used.

Home heating is necessary during the colder months. Rarely are residences centrally heated, so it is necessary to use portable electric or gas heaters.

Electrical appliances are available in La Paz at high prices. Durable electrical and mechanical equipment work best in La Paz since electric current fluctuates. **Important Note**: Since gas service is not available, electric appliances are recommended for this post. Bottled gas is available and inexpensive.

Food

The food situation in Bolivia is precarious. There are often shortages of basic food items due to strikes, profiteering, and weather. Also, because of the economic situation and lack of foreign exchange, there is a shortage of imported foods and items in the marketplace. The Mission commissary is good and is able to alleviate many of these problems for the community. Personnel assigned to Bolivia have a consumables allowance in addition to their normal allowance (check with your agency headquarters to be certain this applies to you). The CLO office upon receipt of your travel orders at post will send a list of recommended items which could be included in this shipment.

Major food sources in La Paz are local shops, open-air markets, and the commissary. Markets sell fresh produce, meats, and dairy products. Meat, when available, is not cut U.S. style and varies in quality. Fair-to-good quality beef, pork (most costly meat), lamb, poultry, and fresh fish (especially trout from Lake Titicaca and tropical fish from Cochabamba) are available. The commissary brings in meat from Argentina. In addition to open-air markets, small shops and several small supermarkets stock canned and packaged items. Specialty shops carry good quality, expensive cheeses and other imports, when available. Although called "supermarkets," these stores only slightly resemble U.S. chains.

Reconstituted pasteurized milk, butter, and limited cheeses are available. Locally canned fruits and vegetables are of lower than average quality.

Mission employees operate a cooperative commissary; membership fees are $250 per single personnel and $350 for families. This refundable membership fee

is payable in three monthly installments. To offset local shortages, the commissary stocks staples, groceries, and canned goods, as well as toiletries, cleaning goods, paper products, cigarettes, and liquor. Transportation and other problems sometimes limit supplies and rationing must be imposed.

Meats and vegetables require longer cooking in La Paz due to the high altitude. Pressure cookers save time and energy and tenderize tougher meat cuts. Cakes and other pastries require adjustments in ingredients and baking time. Although local cooks are familiar with high-altitude cooking, Americans find the Andean Cookbook locally available and written in both Spanish and English, very useful.

The wine industry is young in Bolivia, but a couple of wineries have developed some good wines.

Clothing

Temperatures in La Paz are generally moderate. Spring and fall clothing is worn all year. Temperatures vary considerably when you are in the sun or in the shade. Although lightweight clothing may be comfortable in sunshine, temperature drops are sudden when you move into the shade.

During winter, May through August, a light winter coat is worn in the morning and evening. Daytime temperatures become quite warm, especially at midday. During the rainy season a raincoat, boots, and umbrella are recommended. Warm bathrobes and slippers are comfortable for the house during mornings and evenings. Bring lots of sturdy rubber-soled shoes for the cobblestone streets and steep hills. Sidewalks are extremely slippery when wet.

Clothing can be ordered from the U.S. via APO; delivery takes about 3–6 weeks. In addition, there are many experienced seamstresses and tailors in the La Paz area who are able to copy fashions from photographs. Good wool fabrics, including British wool, are available. Linings, however, are not and should be brought with you or ordered.

Seasons here are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere. Plan your traveling wardrobe, regardless of season, to include a coat and sweater in the hand baggage of each family member—it can be very cold during the summer rains (December–February).

Men. Mediumweight suits are worn all year. Some men wear vests or sweaters with their jackets during cooler days. Bring a good supply of shirts, shoes, underwear, socks, and accessories from the U.S., as well as lightweight clothing. Men traveling in Bolivia to lower altitudes will need one or two summer suits. Bring your golfing gear and shoes. Tennis, volleyball, softball, racquetball, basketball, camping, backpacking, skiing, etc., are all actively pursued here, so bring appropriate sportswear.

Senior- and middle-grade officers need at least one dark suit. Formal occasions in La Paz are black tie; white jackets are sometimes used by officers visiting the warmer cities of Cochabamba or Santa Cruz. A mediumweight dark topcoat is useful, but not essential. Formal wear, including morning clothes, can be rented in La Paz, but sizes are limited.

Women. Clothing worn in the U.S. in early spring and fall is worn year round in La Paz. Skirts and sweaters, as well as basic mediumweight suits and dresses that can be dressed up or down are best. Three-piece suits and dresses with jackets are practical, since they can be varied to suit the temperature. Bring shoes, undergarments, and sportswear from the U.S. Although Bolivian-made nylons are available, they are of poor quality; most women bring or order American hosiery. Sweaters are essential and available locally. Pantsuits, slacks, and jeans are seen everywhere and are worn for casual wear to provide warmth in unheated buildings, theaters, etc. Bring some summer clothes, including a bathing suit, for trips to warmer climates.

The variety of dress required for receptions, cocktail parties, dinner, etc., varies according to rank and representational activities as well as personal preference. Occasionally long dresses are worn for formal functions.

Children. In general, children's clothing in La Paz resembles what is worn in Washington, D.C., in the fall. Emphasis should be on layered clothing that can be added or subtracted according to temperature changes, rather than on extra-heavy clothing.

All types of clothing for babies and some children's clothing are available in La Paz; locally made clothing is inexpensive, imports becoming limited. Disposable diapers are available in the commissary, but not all brands or sizes are available. Rubberpants, underwear, and children's shoes are scarce. Bring plenty of clothes, allowing for growth. Dress for school-age children is informal but tidy. Girls wear jeans, slacks, skirts and sweaters, or dresses to school. Boys wear jeans, slacks, and shirts without ties. Both need windbreakers or jackets, sweaters, raincoats, and sturdy shoes. Dress clothes are needed for social occasions. Bring play clothes, sweatshirts, sneakers, shorts, shirts and blouses, bathing suits, and sportswear. Children use lightweight jackets, sweaters or sweatshirts almost daily. Locally well-made blouses and shirts and velour sweat-suits can be bought at reasonable prices.

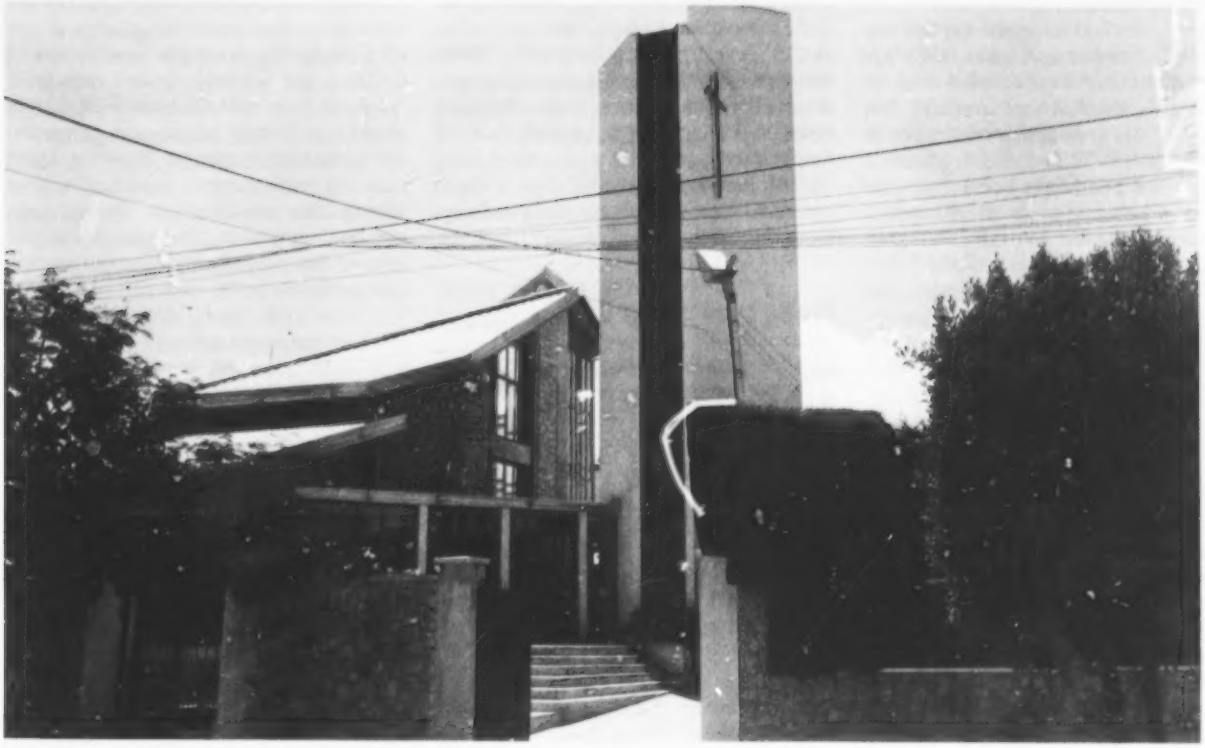
Supplies and Services

Supplies

Bring cosmetics, toiletries, spot remover, insect repellent, and medical supplies to La Paz. These items are available locally but are expensive. Also bring dry-skin creams, sunscreen and suntan lotions, bath oils, and sunglasses to counteract brilliant sun and dry air. Items which are scarce or poor quality and expensive in La Paz include giftwrappings, notions, household tools (i.e., Tupperware), candles, cameras, film, and flashbulbs. If you sew, bring fabrics, plenty of notions, patterns, and, of course, a sewing machine. Bring tablecloths and napkins, glassware, china, serving dishes, and other entertaining items. These items are expensive and of poor quality here, as are kitchenware, bed linens, and towels. Also bring linens and towels for servants. The commissary stocks most household cleaning supplies. Baby foods, particularly strained meats, are hard to find. Only a few junior baby foods are available. Baby formulas, Similac and others, are readily available, as are baby cereals.

Consider bringing your own artificial Christmas tree to post. A couple of weeks before Christmas cedar trees or cedar branches are tied together and sold on street corners. It is speculated that these trees are cut from municipal reforestation projects which makes it illegal but difficult to stop.

Also, bring to post a basic tool kit containing hammer, pliers, regular and Phillips head screwdrivers, picture hanging equipment, white and super glue, etc.



La Paz Community Church.

American Cooperative School auditorium and elementary school area.

Basic Services

La Paz has several adequate drycleaners and prices are reasonable, but to rid clothes of strong cleaning odors, clothes must be aired. A few laundries are available, but most laundry is done at home by maids or laundresses. The Plaza Hotel drycleaners is considered one of the best.

Men's tailoring costs are reasonable but quality is uneven. Women's tailoring is also available. Some people bring material to make servants' uniforms, but adequate uniforms can be bought locally at a reasonable price. Fair shoe repair is available. Good leather service is also available.

La Paz has adequate barbers and beauticians who offer all standard services at moderate prices.

Electrical and mechanical repairs vary in quality. Prices depend on parts availability. Labor costs are reasonable; quality work is rare. Check and repair electrical and mechanical items before shipping to La Paz. Bring basic replacement parts to post.

Automobile body service is very satisfactory. Bring matching body paint, wax, etc., to cover fender benders and dirt damage. Labor is cheap.

Film developing is available but of uneven quality, and not all films can be processed. Most personnel use APO facilities for mail-order film processing. Camera and watch repairs can be made here.

Domestic Help

Virtually all personnel find servants a necessity due to marketing difficulties and the extra time needed to prepare and cook food at high altitude. A combination maid/cook is generally sufficient for a couple with one or two children in a small house. Many Americans with more than two children employ a cook and a general maid or houseboy. Everyone with gardens needs a part-time gardener.

The salaries for servants are reasonable, but must keep pace with Bolivia's hyperinflation. The employer provides meals, uniforms, and lodging for live-in servants. Local law requires an extra month's pay as Christmas bonus, and a patriotic bonus equal to 1 month's salary is paid in July; salaries are thus paid for 14 months annually. Servants are entitled to 10 days paid vacation per year. If mutually acceptable, extra pay may be given in lieu of vacation. Servants vary in efficiency and dependability, though all need training. During a 3-month probationary period, an employee may be terminated without notice or compensation. After this period, 15 days' discharge notice or 15 days' pay are required. When employees are discharged after 12 months service they can receive a longevity bonus equal to 15 days' pay for each year of employment.

All employees should sign a work contract. You can obtain sample forms from the Community Liaison Office.

Religious Activities

Most churches in Bolivia are Roman Catholic. Services are usually conducted in Spanish. Most major Protestant denominations, however, have at least one church in La Paz. Services are in Spanish. Among these are: Baptist — Iglesia Evangelica del Prado; Lutheran — Iglesia Evangelica Luterana; Methodist — Iglesia Metodista en Bolivia; Seventh-Day Adventist — Miraflores; and Christian Missionary Alliance Church — meets in the American School.

The La Paz Community Church, a nondenominational Protestant church, has multi-age Sunday school classes at 9:30 am and English-language services at 10:50 am.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon) has several Spanish branches in La Paz and other Bolivian cities. The headquarters of the Andes South Mission is in La Paz.

The Jewish community in La Paz holds religious services at two synagogues and also maintains a school. There is no Rabbi in La Paz.

Education

Dependent Education

Nearly all children at post attend the American Cooperative School in the residential suburb of Calacoto. The school also sponsors a kindergarten and pre-kindergarten at the same location. The 500–600 member student body is international; about 30% of the students are American, 40% Bolivian, and 30% are third-country nationals. An American director supervises American high school and elementary school principals, and mixed teaching staff (most are American). The student-teacher ratio is less than 25 students per teacher. Instruction is in English and the courses offered compare to college preparatory courses in U.S. primary and secondary schools. Spanish is taught as a foreign language.

The American Cooperative School has long enjoyed a good rating and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. School runs from August to May, with the usual holidays and vacations. Yearly tuition and other required fees are moderate. The school also runs a 6-week summer school offering a variety of courses including remedial math and English classes, Spanish, sports, and others. Special education resources are also available at the school.

School facilities include modern buildings housing a science lab, auditorium with stage, cafeteria, library, audiovisual center, gymnasium, all-purpose room, sports field, volleyball and basketball courts, a racquetball court, indoor swimming pool, and shower and dressing rooms. Students may bring lunches to school, but hot meals are available. In addition to the regular curriculum, several extracurricular activities are provided. Among these are a student government, a school newspaper, an intramural and interscholastic sports program, a drama group that presents several plays during the school year, and a photography club. Various Boy and Girl Scout troops sponsored by the American community also use the school facilities.

Several other schools are also available in La Paz, all opening in February or March and running to late October or early November. They include:

The American Institute: A coeducational school operated by Methodist missionaries. It has regular, primary, and secondary grades and, in addition, offers a 3-year commercial course. Classes are held in Spanish, and English is taught as a foreign language.

St. Andrew's: A Catholic-administered, nonsectarian school with a U.S.-trained Bolivian headmaster. It is housed in an attractive new building. Classes are taught in Spanish.

Franco Boliviano: A French coed school, supported partly by the French Embassy. Classes are conducted in French with Spanish and English taught as foreign languages.

San Calixto and La Salle: Both are Catholic boys' schools; classes are taught in Spanish with English as a foreign language.

School of the Sacred Heart: A girls' school directed by a French Mother Superior. Classes are in Spanish, with French and English taught as foreign languages.

The German community in La Paz directs and supports nonsectarian Mariscal Braun. Classes are in both Spanish and German.

Kindergartens are maintained by the English Catholic College and the Mariscal Braun School. Several private kindergartens, not connected with schools or institutions, are also available. Little English, if any, is taught in private kindergartens. A Spanish-speaking Montessori school is available for preschool children. The Embassy Nursery School, which also provides opportunities for spouse employment, accepts ages 3–5, and meets 9 am to noon, Monday through Thursday.

Special Educational Opportunities

Private instruction in art, music, photography, folk dancing, and ballet is available. The American Cooperative School provides the community with a program of afterschool and evening sports, and educational activities for both students and adults. Depending on demand and availability of teachers, these activities consist of photography, ballet, exercise, square dancing, handicrafts, business courses, language, culture, etc.

The German, American, and French binational centers periodically offer courses and lectures in a variety of fields. Once each semester, a graduate-level course for credit is offered at the American Cooperative School through the University of Arkansas. For those with a working knowledge of Spanish, other special educational opportunities exist. The municipal government sponsors a cultural foundation (Casa Juvenil de la Cultura "Juancito Pinto") which offers classes in music, folk dancing, and puppetry to children free of charge.

Post Orientation Program

Official personnel are met on arrival and provided with information kits. Assigned sponsors help new arrivals settle in. Newcomers are briefed and assisted through orientation and introduced to other Mission personnel. The Embassy has established an orientation program for all new arrivals and their spouses. It is held 1 or 2 times a year and includes discussions of Bolivian culture and history, community and recreational activities in La Paz, and a review of Mission activities by the Ambassador or DCM.

In addition, the CLO organizes tours and visits to places of interest for newcomers. The American Women's Club also sponsors lectures and discussions on Bolivian history, culture, and politics.

The post maintains an FSI-sponsored Spanish-language program. Government employees and dependents of participating agencies are encouraged to attend.

Recreation and Social Life

Sports

Extensive activities are available to sports-minded Mission personnel. Participation in sports is limited only by individual capacity and interest. Persons who are active at ordinary, medium altitudes usually have no trouble adapting to the altitude. The climate is ideal for outdoor sports.

The elevation adds a sense of novelty to skiing, golf, and tennis. Tennis balls are depressurized especially for high altitude, and 300-yard drives on the golf course are occasionally hit by competent players. Soccer is the national sport. Basketball and volleyball are sufficiently important to support national federations. There is an amateur Bolivian softball league which includes at present one team of U.S. Mission personnel. The American Cooperative School's evening programs include a men's basketball league.

The Mallasilla Golf Club has a medium-length, 18-hole course with magnificent vistas about 25 minutes from the city. A special membership, available to diplomats, is $75 per month. Nonmembers may use the club's facilities for a daily fee. Golfers should bring their own equipment and balls. Club facilities include a swimming pool, dining room, and locker rooms.

The La Paz Tennis Club, in the suburb of La Florida, is open to Mission personnel. The club has 20 clay tennis courts, 3 racquetball courts, a large outdoor swimming pool, a billiard room, a clubhouse with a restaurant open on weekends, and a snackbar open daily. No initiation fee is charged for diplomatic or official personnel. Monthly dues, individual or family, are $50 a month. Nonmembers may use the club's facilities for a daily fee.

The Achumani Sports Complex features racquetball and tennis courts, a swimming pool, snackbar, and playground.

Tennis balls not specifically designed for high altitude are not satisfactory for tennis but can be used for the local version of paddle ball. You should bring high altitude balls in your effects. (Old "dead" tennis balls brought from sea level are satisfactory for practice here.)

The La Paz Rod and Gun Club (Club de Caza y Pesca La Paz) is open to Mission personnel for a daily fee. The club has one Olympic skeet and two trap ranges, a mini-trap, a rifle and pistol range, archery targets, and a dry-fly casting range. Various competitions are held throughout the year.

The city has an 8-lane bowling alley with snackbar. You can rent bowling shoes. Both open and league bowling are offered. The Mission has one mixed league.

Swimming in La Paz is possible in various heated indoor and outdoor pools. However, the hygiene of some is below standard. Persons traveling to warmer areas of Bolivia (Trinidad, Santa Cruz, and Cochabamba) will also enjoy swimming. Bring swimsuits for everyone.

Many Americans enjoy trout fishing in areas surrounding La Paz. The trout of Lake Titicaca and nearby glacier lakes are of the salmon family. Trout caught in Lake Titicaca have been reported as large as 28 pounds; however fishing has been poor in recent years due to netting, trapping, and dynamiting. Trolling is the best way to catch these battlers. The small glacier lakes, 3 hours from La Paz, produce fair catches of rainbow trout, weighing up to 4 pounds.

Fly fishing is available 3 hours from La Paz in streams of the lowland valleys of the Yungas. Stream fishing is as effective as lake fishing but is more difficult due to rugged terrain and fast waters. Mepps silver spinners and minnows of small size (0.01) are the best lures. Rainbow trout found in these streams are tastier than lake trout. Better fishing may be found farther from La Paz in lesser-fished waters via four-wheel-drive transportation. Other tropical varieties of fish are found in the warmer waters of the Beni and Santa Cruz which are accessible only by air.

Year-round opportunities for bird shooting are available on the eastern shore of Lake Titicaca and at other high-altitude lakes. The Beni area in the lowlands of Bolivia offers hunting possibilities, including wild hogs, some unprotected deer, and alligator. Bolivia has a long list of protected animals and birds, with which one should be familiar. Hunting and fishing licenses are required in Bolivia. No special clothing nor dogs are required for hunting. Hunters or fishing enthusiasts should bring their own gear.

Sailing on Lake Titicaca, the world's highest navigable lake, is rewarding. A

small fleet of sailboats, from 10-foot Mirror prams on up, are bought and sold at the Bolivian Yacht Club at Huatajata, about 75 minutes from La Paz. For persons with woodworking and rigging ability, a wooden hull can be built on Suriqui Island.

Lake Titicaca is actually two lakes, separated by a narrow strait. The lower lake—Huinamarca—is much smaller and shallower than the Upper Chucuito, a veritable inland sea, with water horizons and persistent swells. Visibility is generally unlimited. The most consistent winds and sunniest weather occur on winter afternoons. Summer, though generally warmer, is characterized by light and variable winds, and frequent rainshowers.

Chacaltaya, at 17,300 feet, the highest ski area in the world, offers advanced and intermediate skiing on a glacier with a spectacular view during the October–April season. When snow cover is heavy enough to fill gullies in upper headwalls, experts will find very steep, challenging skiing. Instruction is seldom available. The 3,000-foot cable lift has a 1,000-foot rise and is the oldest still functioning in the world. It normally operates on Saturday and Sunday. The special hook required for its use may be obtained locally through the Club Andino Boliviano. No ski equipment is sold in Bolivia and rental equipment is difficult to obtain; therefore skiers should bring their own. Chacaltaya is a 50- to 90-minute drive from downtown La Paz; a four-wheel-drive vehicle is recommended for driving the steep dirt road, although normal cars can manage under good conditions. A partly finished day lodge serves soft drinks and some snacks. Snow conditions and weather are variable but frequently superb.

The Cordillera Real mountain range near La Paz offers some of the world's best and most accessible mountain climbing and walking. The Zongo, Condoriri, Linco, and Hichukhota Valleys, reached in 1–3 hours from the city, are each rimmed by spectacular peaks in the 18,000-foot class. Hundreds of peaks offer top-quality weekend climbing for the experienced mountaineer.

Backpacking is another popular pastime and Bolivia offers superb opportunities. Mountain hiking is aided by a network of Indian paths and ancient trails on the dry western slopes and a less extensive network on the wet, and steep, eastern side. It is on these eastern slopes, however, that hikers in good condition find excellent opportunities for walks of from 2 days to a week through magnificent scenery, often over trails originally engineered by the Incas. Stretches of these well-designed ancient roads remain in use today.

Bolivia's two other mountain ranges, the Apolobamba near the Peruvian border and the Quimsa Cruz (south of 21,000-foot Illimani) are harder to reach, as is isolated 21,000-foot Sajama, a volcano near the Chilean border. Other major Bolivian peaks in the 20,000-foot class are Illampu, Ancohuma, Chachacomani, Chearoco, and Huayna Potosi. This last peak is only 1 hour from the city and can be climbed in roughly 16 hours roundtrip by strong climbers. However, the very accessibility of this 19,966-foot mountain has made it the scene of a number of accidents stemming from insufficient experience and acclimatization.

Good 1-day rock and ice climbs can be found in the Khala Cruz-Charquini-Sora Patilla group south of Huayna Potosi and on nearby 18,700-foot Cerro Milluni and its rocky satellites. Climbers and walkers should bring their own equipment to Bolivia.

La Paz has a glider club. Some hang gliding has been done, but the thin air makes this sport difficult and dangerous. Andean air currents offer some of the world's most challenging and highest gliding available for experienced pilots. However, the area is not considered suitable for novices.

An equestrian club offers boarding facilities for privately owned horses and classes in horsemanship. Another club offers rentals and lessons. Horseraces are held periodically.

The most popular spectator sport in Bolivia is football or soccer. Several good Bolivian teams often compete in international competitions. Other spectator sports include wrestling, basketball, and occasional bullfights.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Cochabamba, Bolivia's third largest city, is 150 miles by air and 320 miles by road or railroad. At an altitude of 8,430 feet, it occupies one of the largest and most fertile Andean valleys. Travel time is 30 minutes by air, 8 hours by train, or 5–9 hours by car. A paved all-weather road, with the exception of 33 miles, was completed during 1982.

Copacabana is a resort 88 miles from La Paz on Lake Titicaca and is known for its Shrine of the Virgin of Copacabana to which many Bolivians make pilgrimages. Copacabana can be reached by car from La Paz in about 4 hours via a paved road and about 1-hour stretch of unpaved road with beautiful views of Inca-built terraces. You can also take a day's tour from La Paz which includes travel by hydrofoil from Huatajata (a town on the lake) to Copacabana. The road trip includes a ferry crossing on barges at the lovely Straits of Tiquina. Since barges operate only during the day and few hotel accommodations are available at the straits, plan to arrive in Copacabana before dusk. Copacabana has several hotels. Day trips by motorboat to the Isles of the Sun and Moon, famous in Inca mythology, can be made from Copacabana. On the way to the western shore of Lake Titicaca, about 60 miles from La Paz, are the ruins of the advanced Aymara culture of Tiawanaku, which is a 2½-hour drive from La Paz.

Some 95 miles from La Paz at 8,700 feet, Sorata provides altitude relief. Sorata is in a valley at the foot of Illampu, one of Bolivia's highest mountains. Nearby are interesting caves for exploring. Driving time is 4 hours during dry weather. Near Sorata, along the east shore of Lake Titicaca, is a very large slough that provides some of Bolivia's best duck and goose hunting.

The Yungas are a series of valleys sloping from the cordillera into the eastern jungle region. In the dry months you can reach the area by car in 3–4 hours. Landslides may block roads during rainy months. Roads from La Paz to the Yungas cross the eastern cordillera through a 15,000-foot pass, then drop rapidly into lush, semitropical valleys in less than 50 miles, one of Bolivia's most spectacular sights. A paved all-weather road is under construction. A few hotel accommodations, some with swimming pools, are available at Coroico and Chulumani.

North of Lake Titicaca in Peru is Cuzco, center of the ancient Inca civilization and famed site of the Incas' last stand. Cuzco and nearby Machu Picchu, the "lost city of the Incas," are great sightseeing attractions. The trip from La Paz to Cuzco by air takes 50 minutes.

Arica, a Chilean seaport 20 minutes away by air or 12 hours by train is a good change of scene for those who enjoy the seashore.

Santa Cruz and environs is Bolivia's fastest developing area. The city itself, site of early Spanish culture and capital of Bolivia's promising Eastern lowlands, grew from 34,000 inhabitants in 1950 to 255,000 in the 1978 census. Bolivia's second largest city, Santa Cruz can be reached by road in a 2-day journey overnighting in Cochabamba or by air in 50 minutes.

Northwest of Santa Cruz is the Department of Beni, a sparsely populated region with great potential for agricultural development and cattle production. Major Bolivian rivers traverse the region and offer excellent fishing. These tropical lowlands facing Brazil provide a pleasant change from La Paz. They are interlaced with large rivers, heavily forested, and with a large variety of game. Road trips during dry months to some areas are possible but require elaborate arrangements and four-wheel-drive vehicles. A resort hotel is located near Trinidad.

Other places of interest in Bolivia are Potosi and Sucre. Sucre can be reached by air, rail, or car, and then on to Potosi by train. Potosi is the world's highest city. Today, it is a mining town producing some silver and substantial amounts of tin, lead, and zinc. In 1553 it was decreed an imperial city by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, after Spanish conquistadors discovered silver in 1545. During the late 14th century with 160,000 people it was one of the world's largest cities and the name Potosi became synonymous with untold riches. Estimates are that over a billion dollars' worth of silver was extracted from the Cerro Rico Mountain overlooking Potosi. However, by the 18th century the silver was depleted and Potosi began to decline.

However, the aura of its fabulous past lingers—seen in some of the colonial architecture, much of which is baroque in style. The Colonial Art Museum in Sucre contains detailed color drawings of Potosi in its prime. One major attraction and place of renown in Potosi is the Casa de la Moneda, or mint, established to control minting of colonial wealth. It is one of South America's most important colonial structures. It houses a collection of colonial paintings, sculptures, and archeological and minting materials.

Sucre, the judicial center and constitutional capital of Bolivia at 9,320 feet, is a lovely city nestled at the foot of two hills. A learning center for centuries and the city where Bolivia proclaimed independence, Sucre is now a university town. It offers large monasteries, fine churches, exquisite colonial architecture buildings, colonial paintings, and Old World art collections. Sucre's Colonial Art Museum is one of the two most important in Bolivia—the other is Potosi's Casa de la Moneda.

Entertainment

La Paz has a few nightclubs and discos. These currently include: El Castillo, Studio One, Baccarat, Foxy, and the Gramofono. Prices are lower than in the U.S. The Plaza and Sheraton hotels also have discos; however prices are equivalent to those in the U.S.

Americans as well as Bolivians enjoy the "peñas," or clubs specializing in authentic folk singing, dancing, and folk art displays. These clubs, such as the Naira, El Corregidor, Internacional, Markotambo, and Los Escudos, have shows on Friday and Saturday nights and serve drinks and meals. A visit to one of the peñas will quickly introduce you to Bolivian folklore.

Some unique folkloric festivals highlight the year in La Paz. January 24 begins a week-long fair, "Alacitas," which centers around the Ekeko, the Aymaran talisman of prosperity and good fortune. Miniatures, from clothes to buses, are bought (and given) with the hope that what they represent will be obtained during the year. The carnival is celebrated with parades (a very charming one features children in costumes), dancing, etc., in La Paz. The most outstanding celebration takes place in the city of Oruro, a 3-hour drive by good road from La Paz. Day-long parades feature the world-famous "Diabladas" (devil dancers), bears, and "Morenadas," creating an outstanding display of folkloric costumes and antiplano music. "Jesus, el Gran Poder" is honored in June in La Paz with a parade of dancers and musicians. Year round, small pueblos in the outskirts of La Paz stage interesting festivals. Tarabuco, for example, has an important regional festival; the "Vendimia" (grape harvest) in Tarija in February is quite special and every other year a national folklore festival takes place in Cochabamba.

Some restaurants have good food in a dining-out atmosphere. The Plaza, Sheraton, and Libertador hotel dining rooms offer this atmosphere. Other acceptable restaurants include: Max Bieber's, German Club, El Refugio, La Suisse, Munich, and Charlie's. You can also dine at many Chinese and parrillada-style (barbecues with a variety of meats) restaurants.

Movie theaters in La Paz are inexpensive and show many American films as well as films from Argentina. Brazil, Italy, and France. All films are in the original soundtrack with Spanish subtitles. Films generally debut in La Paz a year or so after their release and print quality is frequently poor.

Video clubs have recently become very popular. The variety is not the best, but tapes can be rented for very reasonable prices.

Social Activities

Among Americans. Most social activities are informal and privately planned. "Happy Hours" sponsored by the Marine Security Guards are good opportunities for newcomers to get acquainted with their colleagues.

Several catering services, especially ones which handle parrilladas, are used by Mission members.

The American Women's Club is open to all American women, and sponsors the 4th of July picnic and other social activities.

Some special-interest groups, such as bowling leagues, softball, basketball, and volleyball teams, travel, and Spanish conversation groups, have been organized among American personnel.

As well as the previously mentioned school activities, many children are involved in scouting. Boy Scout, Cub Scout, Girl Scout, and Brownie troops have been established within the American community. A Teen Center, opened in the fall of 1982, provides teens with a headquarters of their own, complete with game rooms, stereo, video games, and a kitchen. The Teen Director also arranges a number of other teen programs and projects.

International Contacts. Most Americans meet Bolivians through business or social contacts and find them open, friendly, hospitable, and interested in U.S. lifestyle and culture. Several organizations in La Paz further international contacts. The American Chamber of Commerce of Bolivia luncheons provide opportunities to meet local business leaders. The Consular Corps Association and the Diplomatic Association have social functions each year with opportunities to meet foreign colleagues. All Americans are encouraged to join and participate in the activities of the Centro Boliviano-Americano. The Damas Diplomaticas is a longstanding association of women with members of diplomatic missions and wives of domestic and foreign executives in La Paz. The club holds monthly fundraising activities to aid various Bolivian charities. Membership is open to all Mission women.

Social contacts with Bolivians and third-country nationals are often made at private parties and receptions, at work, and

through the various Bolivian social and hobby clubs open to Americans, such as the La Paz Tennis Club and La Paz Book Club.

Members of the DAO and USMILGP should bring to post their formal dress uniform and informal dress uniforms. They will normally be invited to host country military official functions immediately upon their arrival. For civilian official functions they can wear formal dress uniform or formal and informal civilian clothing.

Official Functions

Nature of Functions

Many officers attend national day celebrations of the various countries represented in La Paz and some functions hosted by Bolivian Government officials. These average two or three times a month and dress is usually informal (business suit for men and dresses or suits for women). Newly arrived officers and personnel of all grades attend an orientation program at the Ambassador's residence which includes a cocktail hour. USAID officers and personnel, except for the director and deputy director, are less involved in official representational functions.

Standards of Social Conduct

Americans are encouraged to act and live unostentatiously. Otherwise, standards of social conduct are similar to those in the U.S. The goal is to foster relationships that are both enjoyable and helpful in terms of your work. New personnel should see the Community Liaison Officer and register with the Ambassador's social secretary on arrival and make plans to attend the Mission's next scheduled newcomers orientation meeting with their spouse. Questions about practices may be addressed to the protocol officer in the Political Section.

Calling cards are used in Bolivia and may be printed locally at a moderate cost. A married diplomatic officer may need 100 personal cards and 100–200 "Mr. and Mrs." cards, or 100 cards for the spouse. Small, folded informals are useful and may be ordered locally.

Members of the DAO and USMILGP can expect to attend several weekly military official functions. They consist mostly of graduations of military schools, retirement ceremonies, and parades. These official functions are normally mandatory and there is considerable interaction between DAO and MILGP members and host country military officials.

Special Information

Some of the information and regulations set forth in this report do not necessarily apply to temporary duty personnel or to USAID contract personnel. Such persons should consult their agencies for further information.

Marine Security Guards should read the appropriate station report for details concerning their tours of duty in La Paz.

Members of the USMILGP will be invited to attend field exercises and are required to visit units located outside the main cities. Two sets of field uniforms are required and complementary field gear is recommended.

Cochabamba

The following U.S. Government offices are located in Cochabamba: State Department Consular Agent; Narcotics Assistance Unit Field Office. Personnel assigned to this latter office, which opened in the spring of 1984, should write to NAU La Paz for information.

Santa Cruz

The following U.S. Government offices are located in Santa Cruz: State Department Consular Agent; DEA Field Office. Personnel assigned to this office, which opened in the spring of 1984, should consult DEA Washington and DEA La Paz for information.

Notes For Travelers

Getting to the Post

Commercial travel from the U.S. to La Paz is by air. Eastern Airlines flies from Washington, New York, Miami, Houston, and New Orleans. Direct flights to La Paz via Panama take about 10–15 hours, depending on point of departure. Travelers should ensure that travel to post is in compliance with the Fly America Act. Surface travel to other points in Latin America and then overland to land-locked Bolivia is possible but complicated and time consuming.

All new personnel and official visitors are met at the airport, provided the Mission receives enough advance notice. If you are not met, call the Embassy (350120) where someone is on duty 24 hours daily.

Airfreight. Experience has shown that shipping one's airfreight via APO in boxes or suitcases is preferable to shipping unaccompanied baggage via Eastern. APO packages or suitcases do not need customs clearance and there is less likelihood that your baggage will be missent or lost. Obtain U.S. postal receipts for reimbursement. Postal insurance is recommended if you prefer to use Eastern to ship your airfreight. Allow 4 weeks for it to arrive at post. Customs clearance can take an additional 2 weeks.

Liftvans delivered via the Port of Matarani, Peru should be sheathed in metal (top and sides), have reinforced walls, and be waterproofed as extensively as possible. Liftvans delivered via military aircraft (preferred) should be exterior grade wood or plywood and may not exceed 7 feet in height, 6 feet in width, or 8 feet in length. Although van size is not restricted for surface shipments via the Port of Matarani, as a practical consideration liftvans should not exceed the dimensions specified for Milair above. Inland freight is often by truck and outside vans cannot be sufficiently braced to avoid excessive internal movement of cargo, which causes chafing and other damage.

Insure that privately owned vehicles are adequately crated, as authorized. Automobile crates should be constructed of tongue-and-groove wood planking on a frame of 2″ x 4″ or 4″ x 4″ struts. The crate should be braced every 2 feet on sides and top to avoid vehicle damage, and the bottom of the vehicle should be securely affixed to the bottom of the crate. Transit time for automobiles and other surfacefreight is 3–6 months depending on point of origin, number of transshipments, and season. Congestion in the Port of Matarani is always heavy but reaches crisis proportions during November–March due to heavy mountainous rains which reduce road and rail traffic. Cars, however, can also be shipped from Miami through the dispatch agent to La Paz via LAB or TAB to avoid the congestion in Matarani.

The employee's previous post should always compare cost of shipping household effects via surface against a combination of surface shipment to Charleston, South Carolina, and then transshipping to La Paz via Milair. The latter is always the safest, quickest, and often cheapest method.

The post has requested that bill of lading (residence to residence) service **not be used** as a method of shipping household effects to this post due to local difficulties per 6 FAM H-162.1-3d.

All surface shipments of personal vehicles **must**, repeat, must be accompanied by a commercial invoice (factura comercial) issued by a Bolivian Consul which states the value of the shipment. **Without this document, post will not be able to clear shipment through customs.**

Consign surface shipments as follows:

STATE, USICA, USDAO, USMILGP
American Ambassador
American Embassy (owner's initials)
La Paz, Bolivia
Via Matarani, Peru or via Arica, Chile
(Depending on local conditions.
Cable Post for advice)

USAID
Employee's name
USAID
La Paz, Bolivia
Via Matarani, Peru

IAGS
DMA IAGS Bolivia Project
c/o American Embassy
La Paz, Bolivia
Via Matarani, Peru

Consign Milair shipments as follows:

STATE, USIS, USAID, USDAO, MILGP
Transportation Officer
Charleston AFB
Charleston, South Carolina
TAC No.
MARK FOR: Amembassy* (owner's initials) La Paz, Bolivia (*USAID shipments mark for USAID). Apply following TAC No.:

Department of State	A581
AID	A814
USIS	A592
US Navy (Marines)	A567

Forward all airfreight shipments to La Paz via Eastern (main connecting points at New York, Panama, and Miami). Do not allow airfreight shipments to be sent FRAV (freight available). Consign airfreight shipments as follows:

American Ambassador
American Embassy (employee's initials)
La Paz, Bolivia
(USAID: Consign to employee c/o USAID)

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Customs and Duties

All personnel assigned to La Paz (State, USAID, USIS, DAO, IAGS, MILGP, DEA) are entitled to duty-free entry of household and personal effects on initial assignment, and limited additional duty-free shipments each year based on a sliding scale. Special import restrictions apply to liquor, tobacco, and foodstuffs. Consult by telegram the appropriate administrative office in La Paz before shipping these items. Also, the General Services Office (GSO) carries copies of the latest up-to-date system of exemptions from customs duties established for Diplomatic and Consular Officers and members of International and Special Organizations accredited in Bolivia. Check with GSO, prior to arrival, for a copy of this document.

Mission members, depending on their travel authorization and agreements with

the Bolivian Government, may import one car duty free. Automobiles imported into Bolivia should not be ostentatious. Since import regulations change, write or cable the appropriate administrative office in La Paz or the Embassy General Services Office requesting permission to import a specific vehicle.

Vehicles sales are regulated by the U.S. Mission Executive Committee. (**See also** Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property).

Unleaded gasoline is not sold in Bolivia. Catalytic converters should be removed from vehicles before shipment to Bolivia, if possible. A letter from EPA will be required for this work in the U.S. They can be removed in Bolivia, but work is questionable. Catalytic converters on 1975–84 vehicles would be required again if returned to the U.S.

Passage

All personnel assigned to La Paz must have a visa and a valid smallpox inoculation certificate. Before leaving, obtain visas for any stopover countries. Visitors and others traveling with regular passports can enter Bolivia with either a visa or a tourist card, and a yellow fever inoculation certificate. If you plan to enter Bolivia by private car, notify your agency's Administrative Section in La Paz at least 2 months before expected arrival. Numerous restrictions are imposed on entry and exit by car, and documentation procedures are time-consuming.

Pets

You may import pets by presenting a valid certificate of vaccination against rabies certified by a Bolivian consul or other official. No quarantine is imposed. Pets obtained here should be inoculated against distemper and rabies. Veterinarians will make house calls to provide these shots. Other medication for pets is difficult to obtain.

Firearms and Ammunition

Only the following non-automatic firearms and ammunition may be brought to Bolivia:

Item	Quantity
Pistols and revolvers	1
Rifles	1
Shotguns	1
Ammunition for above arms	500 rounds total

The above-listed firearms and ammunition may be shipped (but not mailed) to post without an export license, provided they are consigned to U.S. personnel for their personal use and are not for resale. Prior approval of the Chief of Mission for this list is not necessary, but all firearms must be registered with the Embassy and Bolivian National Police on arrival, and you must buy local gun permits. The post's security officer can help you comply with these procedures.

To take additional firearms and ammunition into the country, all personnel assigned to La Paz must ask and receive permission, in writing, from the Chief of Mission in advance. To ship additional firearms and ammunition from the U.S., you must forward copies of your exchange of correspondence with the Chief of Mission, along with a completed Form DSP–5 (export application) to the Office of Munitions Control (PM/MC), Department of State, Washington D.C. 20520. The application should include all firearms and ammunition to be shipped to post. The export license issued by PM/MC must be given at time of shipment to the U.S. Despatch Agent who will forward it and other shipping documents to U.S. Customs.

If you receive permission from your next Chief of Mission to ship firearms and ammunition in excess of the prescribed amount and will ship them between foreign countries only, no license is necessary from PM/MC.

No Department of State license will be issued, or is needed, if you ship only shotguns (with barrels 18″ or over in length) and shotgun ammunition in excess of the quantities listed. You must, however, comply with the Chief of Mission's determination and with export regulations of the Office of Export Control, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Upon transfer, firearms must either be shipped out of the country with the employee's effects or sold to another American member of the Mission.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Peso Boliviano ($b) is the currency unit in Bolivia. As of September 1985, the official exchange rate was $b 125,000 to U.S. $1. In addition to the official exchange rate, a parallel rate set by the open market is used for most transactions other than official.

The Embassy does not provide accommodation exchange facilities. Foreign exchange houses (casas de cambio) are readily accessible and will accept personal checks, travelers checks, and U.S. currency from Mission personnel in exchange for pesos at the parallel rate. Neither U.S. currency nor travelers checks are available in Bolivia. A U.S. bank account is mandatory for Mission personnel in order to obtain local currency, as well as being most desirable for commissary and mail order purchases.

The metric system is used in local weights and measures (uncontrolled and not inspected). The open-air markets, however, use both kilos and pounds.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Restrictions

All personnel pay gasoline taxes, but total price is moderate. Import duties—part of the retail price of commodities—cannot be recovered. Bolivia has a built-in sales tax of 5% on all commodities. Small fees are charged for driving, hunting, and fishing licenses. Restaurants add 26% to each bill, which includes 10% for service plus other taxes.

Motor vehicles, personal articles, and household goods which have been imported duty free and which have been in your possession for a period of at least 2 years, may be sold or disposed of in Bolivia without payment of taxes and duties. No sales of property or motor vehicles may be made prior to 60 days before you depart Bolivia. The Embassy's Property Sales and Vehicle Control Committee comprises members of all post U.S. Government agencies. Requests for sale of personal property and vehicles must be submitted to the committee in writing, and approved by them, before any sale. These regulations apply to all U.S. Mission members, and their spouses and dependents, regardless of agency, including contract employees and third-country nationals attached to or under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Embassy in La Paz and its consular agencies in Bolivia.

Facilities

The Embassy does not have a disbursing officer, and payments of vouchers, travel claims, etc., in U.S. dollars are made by Treasury check issued in Washington, D.C. Payments are normally received from Washington about 4–6 weeks after claims are submitted. Subject to maximum amounts set by the Department, payments in local currency may be made by the Embassy cashier in lieu of dollar checks.

Recommended Reading

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

General

American University. *Area Handbook for Bolivia.* U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1974.

Arnade, Charles W. *The Historiography of Colonial and Modern Bolivia.* Hispanic American Historical Review: August 1962.

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Barton, Robert A. *A Short History of the Republic of Bolivia.* Ethridge: Detroit, 1969.

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Engel, Frederic Andre. *An Ancient World Preserved, Relics and Records of Prehistory in the Andes.* Crown Publishers: New York, 1976.

Fifer, J. Valerie. *Bolivia: Land, Location and Politics Since 1825.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1972.

Geddes, Charles F. *Patino the Tin King.* Robert Hale and Co.: London, 1972.

Heath, Dwight B. *Historical Dictionary of Bolivia.* The Scarecrow Press: Metuchen, N.J., 1971.

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James, Daniel. *The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Che Guevara.* Stein and Day: New York, 1968.

Klein, Herbert S. *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia, 1880–1952.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1969.

Malloy, James M. and Richard S. Thorn, eds. *Beyond the Revolution, Bolivia Since 1952.* University of Pittsburgh Press: Pittsburgh, 1971.

Malloy, James M. *Bolivia: The Uncompleted Revolution.* University of Pittsburgh Press: Pittsburgh, 1970.

McIntyre, Loren. *The Incredible Incas and Their Limitless Land:* National Geographic Society.

Morrison, Tony. *Land Above the Clouds.* Librerias A.B.O., S.A.: Buenos Aires, 1974.

Wennergren, E. Boyd and Morris D. Whittacker. *The Status of Bolivian Agriculture.* New York.

Zondag, Cornelius H. *The Bolivian Economy—1952–65.* Praeger: New York, 1966.

Books for Children

Appel, Benjamin. *Shepherd of the Sun, The Story of the Incas.* Ivan Obolensky, Inc.: New York, 1961.

Carter, William E. *The First Book of Bolivia.* Watts, Inc.: New York, 1963.

Radau, Hans. *Illampu, Adventures in the Andes.* Abelard-Schuman: New York, 1961.

Local Holidays

The Embassy observes all holidays observed by the Governments of the United States and Bolivia. Shops are closed on local holidays. While the duty officer is ready to assist newcomers, you should try to arrange your travel to avoid arriving at post on a local or U.S. holiday. Thursday arrivals allow newcomers to rest and acclimate before the opening of business on Monday.

Following is a current list of Bolivian holidays:

New Year's Day
Carnival (Monday and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday)
Good Friday
Bolivian Labor Day (May 1)
Corpus Christi
La Paz Day (July 16)
Bolivian Independence Day (Aug. 6)
All Souls Day (November 2)
Christmas Day (December 25)